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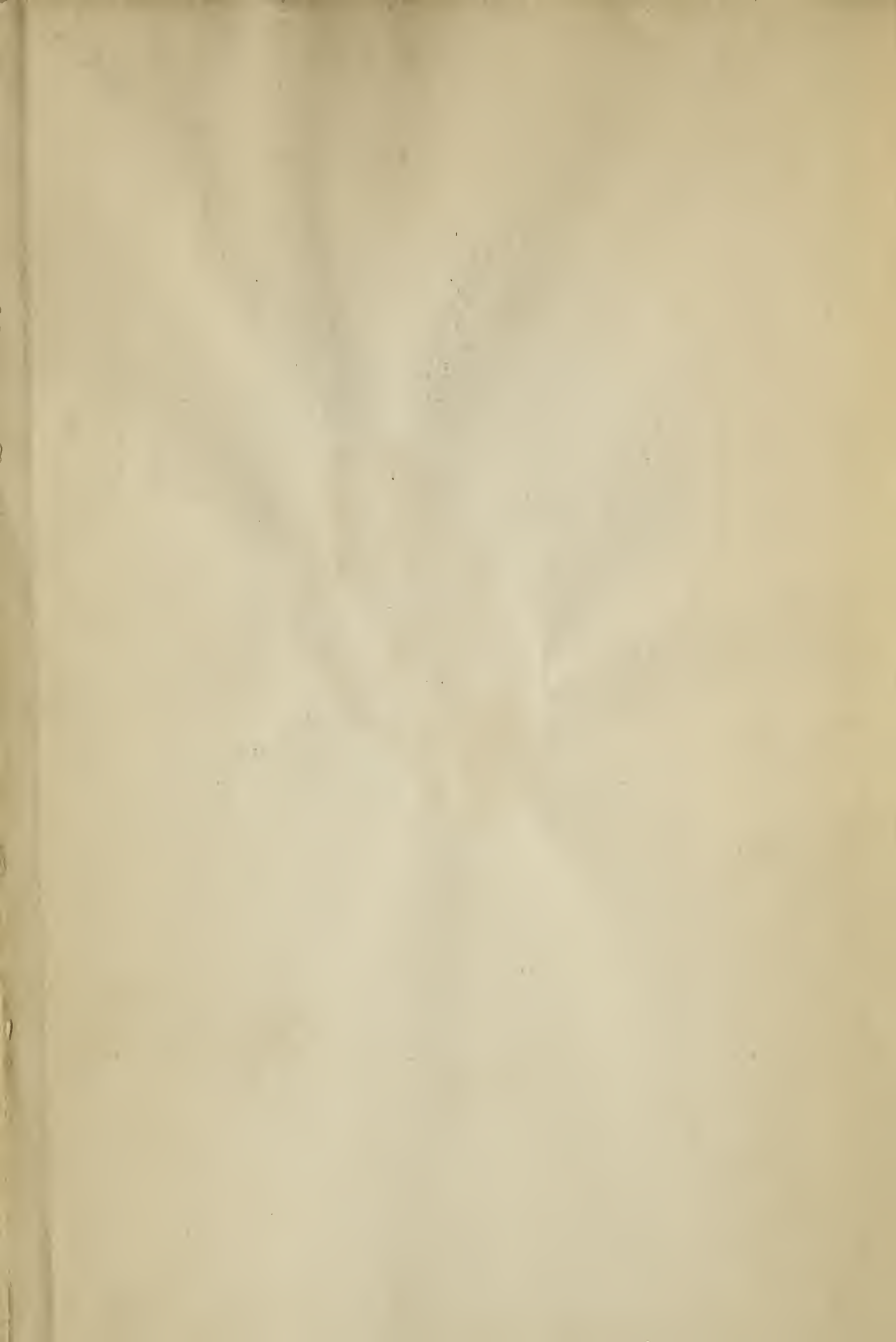
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Myrtle Reed

As Her Friends Know Her

By Ethel S. Colson

LET'S see! She's sure to be literary, so we must choose a name that will look well in print; she's sure to marry, so one name will be enough. I have it—Myrtle!" And thus, by the father who still adores her, was Myrtle Reed named when she was but two days old.

The intuitive prediction of this devoted parent, between whom and his brilliant daughter a peculiar sympathy has always existed, proved true in every detail. From her earliest childhood the clever girl, inheriting from both sides of the family literary and scholarly traditions, took to writing as a duck to water, or, as she herself puts it, she was "vaccinated with literature and it took."

Her equally devoted mother, Elizabeth A. Reed, famed for her wide knowledge and long researches in Persian and Hindu literature, speedily discovered and proudly fostered the child's genius. At an age when most girls are consistently "clothes-minded," this particular girl was writing tender poetry and good prose. As she also enjoys herself extremely, Myrtle Reed, indeed, may be said to have a triple genius—for literature, love, and a "royal good time."

Born in Norwood Park, Chicago, September 27, 1874—no, she does n't in the least mind telling her age and truthfully at that—the genial good spirits for which Myrtle Reed is almost as widely famous as for the tender love stories that represent the other half of her actually "dual nature," were noticeable even in infancy. Her course at the West Division High School, Chicago, was marked by high scholarship and numberless relieving pranks. The *Love Letters of a Musician*, composed soon after her graduation, surprised all her friends by their total unlikeness to the girl's merry chatter and unfailingly scintillating wit. The piquant, pungent sayings of *The Spinster Book* that shortly followed, expressed the opposite side of her unusual mentality. So did *The Book of Clever Beasts*, which followed later on, and which won from Theodore Roosevelt, then President, a warmly appreciative letter.

Oddly enough, however, the bubbling, irrepressible fun, the humorous element of Myrtle Reed's remarkable make-up, never has been so thoroughly recognized by her vast public—no other woman writer has so sure and steady an advance sale record as this gracious teller of graceful "heart interest" tales—as her true vein. To the great majority of her readers it is as little known as are the numerous kindnesses in which she finds pleasure to all but those who profit by her graciously offered aid. Since *The Book of Clever Beasts* she has published no more humorous writings under her own name, though, as she merrily says, she has "supported half a dozen pen-names," and many a funny story and laughable sketch or skit is turned out in this way.

Almost simultaneously with the publication of her first literary success, *Love Letters of a Musician*, came the first "real" love affair of the brilliant author. Always Myrtle Reed has been loved—always she will be. But James Sydney McCullough, a clever young Irish-Canadian, was the lucky man who unlocked the inner portal of her generous heart.

The two made acquaintance through correspondence in their school days. Miss Reed was editor of the West Division High School paper, while Mr. McCullough was performing similar duties for a Toronto school journal. He wrote—to ask questions in regard to the management of the financial part of the enterprise, and kept on writing. A long and romantic courtship followed, and, after six years, the two met, for two brief hours. This time was all-sufficient, however, for Mr. McCullough to discover that he had found "the one girl." After securing, though not too quickly, a definite promise, Mr. McCullough gave up his interests in Toronto, went to Chicago, and began all over again, in the real estate business.

About this time there sprang into being the unusual and original manifestation of the tender passion which later flowered into the series of ten charming and helpful cookbooks, bound in blue and white gingham and modestly signed "Olive Green." "He had the tastes of an epicure," says Mrs. McCullough, reminiscently, "and the appetite of a healthy horse, and I naturally began to think about the gas range and chafing dish, in a wholly unselfish desire to please. Perhaps every-

thing I cooked was good, and perhaps it was n't; but he swore manfully that it was—and I kept on.

“My mother always had been anxious for me to be a good housekeeper. She told me, when I was a mere infant, that if I were going to write, I absolutely HAD to cook, and help to remove the long-standing reproach that went with the old-fashioned name ‘blue-stocking.’ I did n't care a bit about it, but ‘Binkie’ was coming every evening and every Sunday, and ‘Binkie’ was invariably hungry; so I went up against the obstacle with all steam on. I knew I would n't take a position as stenographer without knowing shorthand, or attempt to teach music when I could n't play a tune with either hand, let alone both at once; so, why should I take a lifelong situation as a man's wife without knowing how to keep house?”

Mrs. McCullough—to give her the married title she much prefers to the “Miss Reed” upon which certain unthinking individuals insist—points proudly to her sleek, prosperous-looking and altogether well-fed husband in proof of the quality of her culinary art. Since her marriage, however, October 22, 1906, she has done comparatively little cooking. “I'm too busy,” she explains; but adds, wistfully: “and Annie won't let me come into the kitchen. She knows her work and wants to do it without interference, as I do mine, but on Sunday nights and on ‘off days’ I can cook spaghetti, or make a salad, or make chocolate pancakes in the electric chafing dish and spread 'em with strawberry jam, or try some experiment which looks promising. I yield this point, and gladly, for my ‘Priceless Jewel’ has shown no peripatetic tendencies in the three years and more she has lived with us—and we don't want her to.”

Miss Reed's wedding was a disappointment to many friends, in that it was very quietly conducted, its characteristic features being exactly similar to those of the wedding ceremony described in *Flower of the Dusk*, the first novel written after her marriage. The happy couple went straight to *Paradise Flat*, in the

apartment house they built together, and, at that time, according to the quaint *Explanation Book* later issued by Mrs. McCullough in a limited edition for Christmas purposes, consisting of "six rooms and a mortgage," on Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, "At the Sign of the Crossed Flags"—American and British. In the same delightful booklet, *Paradise Flat* is characterized as a "Close Corporation, Limited. Object, Happiness. Assets, Faith, Hope and Charity." "The Menage" is thus listed by its delighted "Manager":

President—Probably Permanent—Mr. James Sydney McCullough. Pet Name: "Binkie."

Manager—Permanent—Mrs. James Sydney McCullough. (Used to be Myrtle Reed, Spinster.)

Priceless Jewel—Probably Peripatetic—Miss Annie Larsen.

Fireside Sphinx—Particularly Peripatetic—Pauline Pussens Catt.

"Pauline Pussens" having proved to be peripatetic, her place is now filled by a particularly fine yellow feline known as "James Pussens Catt," the "James" being in honor of Mr. McCullough, who brought him home one night in his overcoat pocket. Under the name of "Mr. Boffin" this cat appears in *Old Rose and Silver*.

Mrs. McCullough loves dogs, especially collies, setters and St. Bernards, but insists that to keep a dog in a flat is fair neither to the dog nor the flat, to say nothing of the neighbors. She is fond of horses, but at present is deeply enamored of her electric automobile, which she has christened the "go-cart." A little note in the *Explanation Book* explains the secret of Mr. McCullough's pet name by recalling Kipling's verses about "My Firstest Friend."

The McCulloughs are nothing if not hospitable, and *Paradise Flat* was scarcely in order—it is crowded, from the brass knocker on the front door, which a brass plate requests visitors to use if they are inclined to knock, since "no knocking is allowed inside," to the white-tiled gem of a kitchen, with quaint and beautiful things of a varied nature—before its happy occupants began giving parties.

All manner of notables, literary, dramatic, artistic and musical, have been entertained in its pleasant precincts, and each "real friend" receiving a copy of the *Explanations*

tion Book also received a genuine "meal ticket," in sign and token of the warm welcome always awaiting him or her at *Paradise Flat*. "If you receive one of these books," it is added, "it is a sign that you are considered a Friend of the Establishment and that your presence is earnestly desired." The *Paradise Flat* toast, usually drunk from the handsome silver loving cup presented to Mrs. McCullough by her publishers as a wedding gift, is: "May our house always be too small to hold all our friends"—a toast pretty certain of realization.

The final clause of the "Rules and Regulations" of the joyous household reads thus: "Believing that a house takes its atmosphere from the speech and thought of those who are in it, and wishing our six small rooms to be a true home in every sense of the word, we ask our friends, while here, to say only kind things, think the best of everything and everybody, and to help us do the same. N. B.—Matrimonial differences are settled on the Back Porch"—which, by the way, is a delightful, vine-shaded, flower-bordered retreat.

The *Explanation Book* also contains an amusing list of the *Paradise Flat Auxiliary Corps*, the *Index Expurgatorius*, or list of "Things the Manager Would Be Glad Not to Hear Again," and the "Bench Rules of the *Paradise Flat Husband Shows*," which, while avowedly "subject to revision," have served for three gloriously hilarious celebrations. The first Husband Show took place on the first anniversary of the McCullough marriage, prizes being offered for the looks, character, disposition and qualifications of contestants, entered by their wives, and judged by three sympathetic spinsters of diversified nature and kind. At all three of the Husband Shows Mr. McCullough has won the "Prize for Looks," to the great delight of his wife. The "Bench Rules" follow:

1. Thoroughbreds only are permitted to enter.
2. In order to establish a high standard, only those known to possess something especially fine in the husband line are permitted to compete.
3. Only one entry accepted from each exhibitor.
4. No husband is allowed to compete for two prizes, but husbands winning ribbons or consolation prizes are not debarred from the other classes.
5. The jury has

been chosen with great care, and the decision of any two of the three judges is absolutely final.

6. Husbands or exhibitors attempting to bribe judges will be ruled out.

7. All husbands must wear the regulation collar during the entire show.

8. Exhibits arriving late must come in the back way.

9. Management not responsible for conduct of exhibits during the show.

10. All husbands will be properly fed and liquefied by the management.

11. All exhibits are requested to look pleasant.

12. Exhibitors are personally responsible for their exhibits and must take them home at the close of the show.

13. While all reasonable precautions will be taken and special guards employed, the management disclaims responsibility for lost, strayed, stolen or mislaid exhibits.

The prizes for the Husband Shows manifested all the humor and originality for which Mrs. McCullough is famous, as did also the refreshments. Such statements are equally true of the Bean Party given in the back yard to celebrate Mr. McCullough's birthday. The McCulloughs allude to it, invariably, as "the back yard," which, indeed, seems right and proper for an apartment building, but the place itself looks more like a park than anything else. The Bean Party was a progressive function, games with beans being played at seven tables decorated in the prismatic colors and appropriately illuminated, the crescent leading up to a veritable "pot of gold" suspended from a tree at the foot of the rainbow. After supper there was an auction, guests buying mysteriously wrapped parcels with the beans they had won at the tables.

Later on the McCulloughs gave a party in honor of the American Hen, a quietly domestic and industrious citizen well in accord with Mrs. McCullough's ideals. The invitations were written on hard-boiled eggs and packed in small baskets filled with hay, a few feathers being scattered about for realistic effect. "Henry and Henrietta," the guests of honor, received in a gaily decorated coop on the back porch. Three other chickens were also brought by guests; one pair of magnificent White Leghorns, bearing silver tags on their yellow legs, were duly christened "Binkie" and "Myrtle" to celebrate the auspicious occasion. The celebration ended with the singing of an amusing "'Owed' to the Hén," composed by Mrs. McCullough.

All these and many other original entertainments, to say nothing of innumerable less premeditated occasions, take place, as it were, "between books." All the year round Mrs. McCullough works steadily, though not always actually writing. Last October she was represented by four published books: *Master of the Vineyard*, *Sonnets to a Lover*—dedicated to Mr. McCullough—and two cook-books. When she has time—and inspiration—she writes verse and short stories, or whatever strikes her fancy, but, to quote once more from the *Explanation Book*—

In February and March, usually, the Manager is in her shell, organizing a literary production, and is inaccessible to all but the Patron Saint, the President, the Priceless Jewel, and a badly frightened stenographer. She is also too cross to be desirable socially. Those desiring corroboration may inquire of the President. Those who love the Manager or themselves will let her alone during these eight weeks.

Friends are notified of Mrs. McCullough's retirement by the receipt of one of the clever postals designed by her artist friend, Pauline Palmer, depicting the author's shell in the act of closing. Emergence from this retreat is usually marked by some social function. While a book is in progress she is visible only to members of her immediate family, though many of her friends miss her too much not to attempt to cross the barrier. Sometimes, indeed, she leaves her home and takes refuge in some quiet place where she is not known until after the creation is accomplished. *Master of the Vineyard* was written in this way, last year, in a Detroit hotel.

Mrs. McCullough does all her work herself, seldom having a stenographer even to transcribe the final version of the stories over which she toils with such ardent and arduous concentration. Every book that appears has been written by her own hand—or typewriter, rather—at least twice. *Lavender and Old Lace* was written three times before satisfying both author and publisher.

Loving her work devotedly, having a high conception of her vocation, she spends herself prodigally in the preparation of her novels, living at high pressure for two months at a time.



Sentiment, not sentimentality, may be set down as the keynote of her work. Into it go all the force and power of a strong nature, the production of her stories being a labor of love that leaves the author, despite her fine physique and splendid health, utterly exhausted. Usually, when the last proofs have been read, Mr. McCullough takes his wife a-fishing, in some quiet place as nearly as possible out of the sound of the human voice. Blessed with great recuperative power, and endowed with a deep love of Nature, she soon is once more herself; but the sensitive nature that renders possible such intense enjoyment of life demands a high emotional toll, and the gifted writer has need of all her unlimited capacity for fun.

This capacity, as original and unique in expression as all things else about its possessor, comes out in such merry "tricks and manners" as the wedding trip which Mrs. McCullough took, in part, alone. This journey, deferred until *Paradise Flat* was nearly completed, began with a trip to Washington, D. C. Mr. McCullough has not the gift of punctuality, and Mrs. McCullough sagely reflected that while the thought of going through life without "The Beloved" was unbearable, the thought of being late to all engagements was distinctly trying, punctuality being her own "be-setting sin." So she warned him that, honeymoon though it was, she, at least, would start on time. Mr. McCullough reached the railway station where he was to meet her a few minutes too late, and discovered that she had gone on, with all the tickets, baggage and money of the two. He caught up with her in Washington, arriving an hour after her own train, which was delayed, but, in the meantime, she had enjoyed more than one hearty laugh over his discomfiture, and startled a newer bride—whose husband had not missed the train—almost out of her wits by explaining that she "always took her wedding journeys alone." "The Beloved" is said to have kept better time, upon the whole, ever since, though occasionally subject to relapse. "Out West," says Mrs. McCullough, proudly, "he made twenty-nine consecutive trains without a break, though at Salt Lake City the cinders of the starting engine fell upon his outspread coat tails. I was on the platform, so I did n't

worry much, as I had the tickets. I always carry 'em—and the money too."

Hard as she works during the day, her typewriter is closed and her papers folded at six or half-past in the evening. "My evenings and Sundays belong absolutely to my husband," she says. When asked which she would choose, marriage or a career, she answered, earnestly:

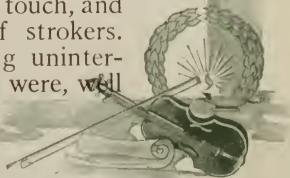
"I never have had to choose, as, with me, the two are harmonious and supplement one another; but, for any woman, I do not believe the most brilliant career offers anything worth an hour of being married to the man she loves and who loves her."

Mr. McCullough, it is needless to add, also scorns the idea that real marriage is a failure. "During the seventeen years I've known him," the author says, "he has had a deep belief in me, an unselfish pride in my work, and a boundless hope for my future. On this I lean, when things won't come right; and when they do, I endeavor to justify it."

When asked which she considered her best book, she replied: "I trust I have it yet to write. I am never satisfied with anything I do, after the first glow of ecstasy that comes with creation is over."

Mrs. McCullough belongs in the ranks of the anti-suffragists, though admitting that she considers woman's ballot a question of expediency, rather than of abstract right.

She is fond of all sorts of simple gaiety, is normally interested in clothes and all other truly feminine matters, from the lavender-scented sheets of her well-filled linen closet to the dinner set of Chinese gold-medallion ware, picked up, piece by piece, from coast to coast. She likes practically all her fellows, though confessing to occasional psychological attractions and repulsions, equally pronounced. "I don't like everybody," she explains; "but I can get along with anybody who won't stroke or pat me, and who is willing to call me Mrs. McCullough instead of the 'Miss Reed' I left at the altar four years ago. With pitifully few exceptions, I have a horror of the personal touch, and our women seem to be a nation of strokers. I like to have fresh air circulating uninterruptedly all around me—to be, as it were, well insulated."



“I have learned,” she said, a little later, “to save myself for things that count. First I belong to my husband, then to my work, then to my friends. I don’t sew, or trim hats, or do fancy work, or play cards, or do a lot of things I might do—indeed, I even pay some one to shop for me, most of the time.

I have discovered that in these little things I spend creative energy which I might use to better advantage elsewhere.

“I love the theatre, small informal parties, music, and a lot of other things, especially travel, though I’ve never gone abroad, as yet, simply because there’s no land route, and I could become actively ill inside of ten minutes in a rowboat full of plants on a lawn. It is n’t the motion, surely, for I rather like a bumpy automobile, and I could spend my life in ecstasy and die in bliss on a roller coaster. I don’t know what it is, but even the sight of a sailor hat makes me feel queer; and when we crossed the Gulf of Mexico, from Vera Cruz to New Orleans, in a freight steamer—” An eloquent silence indicated that the remainder of the subject was painful, even in retrospect.

“After all,” she concluded, “I believe that my favorite relaxation is just to sit and talk with my friends.”





Why Myrtle Reed's Books Are Popular

By Norma Bright Carson

It is significant to note that, in a day when novelists and public alike seem to be absorbed in a contemplation of unsavory sex problems, when there seems, indeed, to have swept over the literary effort of the English-speaking world an epidemic of ambition to produce fiction that is suggestive of the sordid, the unclean, and the generally unwholesome—in response, apparently, to an insatiable desire on the part of prospective readers for the same unpleasant, degrading portrayal of life—it is significant, let us repeat, that, under such conditions, books of the type written by Myrtle Reed should stand in the very front rank of popular stories—almost unrivalled in their capacity to sell.

It is, however, significant in a pleasurable way. It proves that the public is not entirely to blame for the reign of an immoral fiction, since it shows that the public is not only ready but eager for romance that is sweet and clean and soul-nourishing.

Myrtle Reed published the first of her series of romances in 1898, when *Love Letters of a Musician* appeared. Since then, once each year, she has given us a book, till the list includes: *Later Love Letters of a Musician*, *The Spinster Book*, *Lavender and Old Lace*, *The Master's Violin*, *At the Sign of the Jack o' Lantern*, *A Spinner in the Sun*, *The Shadow of Victory*, *Love Affairs of Literary Men*, *Flower of the Dusk*, *Old Rose and Silver*, *Master of the Vineyard*, *A Weaver of Dreams* and *Sonnets to a Lover*.

Of these, the *Love Letters* present two volumes of imaginary letters that are as charming and vivid as any letters in all fiction, and their tenderness and depth, their pure passion, are as vital as the same attributes in Paul Leicester Ford's *Story of an Untold Love*. The music idea pervades them—the first series comprises the unsent letters of a musician to the woman he loves, but to whom he may not aspire—a graceful turn being given to this idealistic love-progress in the closing chapters, where, during his illness, the “dream

woman" comes into possession of the letters, and reveals her willingness to claim both them and their writer for her own. In the second series, the same musician writes to his wife during an enforced separation, and the lover in him endures to glorify the precious sense of possession he experiences as a husband.

There is nothing petty or cheap in these revelations of the heart. The poet in the musician speaks through them—in wonderful Nature pictures, in appropriately toned backgrounds, in fervor of imagination, and in sweet reaches of thought. The feelings expressed are every-day feelings, the sentiments embodied lay no claim to originality—but imagination and the right word with which to paint the picture illumine every chapter, in which a poetic generalization is gradually reduced to concreteness in a feeling climax through which heart throbs to heart and spirit speaks to spirit. To use just one quotation for an example (*Later Love Letters of a Musician*):

Ah, it is a strange thing—Love's fingers on the heart, making tenderness out of bitterness and changing weakness into strength! When once a woman's eyes, with understanding love, have looked into the very depths of a man's soul, he need seek no farther for the Philosopher's Stone.

As if by magic, the love of the many comes with the love of the one. One flash of the love-light makes the whole world new, one chord of Love's music changes all sound to song, and one touch of Love's hand so glorifies the earth that it needs no other alchemy to make it truly gold.

This same appreciation for all the finer lights and shadows of love—earth's fire and the sweetness of Heaven in that strange comminglement which gives to life its tenderest and most rapturous episodes—may be found permeating all of Myrtle Reed's stories; and it is because of her touches of idealism, her deliberate turning away from everything that suggests mere selfish passion or the ascendancy of the brute over the nobler perceptions, that one little girl, writing her thought about Mrs. McCullough, said: "She must be a good woman." Of itself, that should be one of the highest examples of praise that this author has received.

However, if Myrtle Reed's stories were all sweetness and idealism and poetic glamour, they would not make the wide appeal that has sent *Lavender and Old Lace* to its fortieth printing, and most of the others into five, six, even so many as eighteen editions.

There are other elements that enter into the making of a Reed story which temper fine feeling with lightness and the magic of words with a quality of substance that remains. The first of these is a never-failing humor; the second is an optimism that overleaps every obstacle. Myrtle Reed's humor is of the real sort—the laughter is ever close to the tears, the light chases the shadows—here and there are keen flashes of wit, and now and then a touch of satire, but the shafts are not too sharply pointed, and the cynicism is without a taint of bitterness.

Mrs. McCullough has succeeded best where her plots have been simplest. The charm of her work lies in the way it is done, rather than in any unusualness of design or in any versatility of invention. And yet she is versatile—versatile in the manner of applying her method, for she can use similar ideas many times over, but in a fresh way each time. And while she is in no sense remarkable for her originality, either in her thought or her psychology, yet she is always and ever individual, expressing everything in a fashion unmistakably her own. For instance, she employs color schemes in a manner that has identified her books in every instance. Her *Lavender and Old Lace* suggests the dainty little lady who plays so prominent and pathetic a part in the story; her *Old Rose and Silver* again gives the keynote to her situation. In the same way, her other titles express most picturesquely the idea of the story: *Flower of the Dusk*—the child of a blind man; *A Spinner in the Sun*—the tale of a veiled woman who purposely hides her beauty to satisfy a vengeance.

Myrtle Reed has brought into being many characters that are widely known and loved, from Miss Ainslie and Aunt Peace and the queer old violin master, to the irrepressible Crosby twins, whose antics so enliven the pages of *Old Rose and Silver*. She employs no villains, indulges in no murder scenes; her death episodes have no horror; her pathos never touches melodrama. Yet each of her characters seems to have had a happiness and a sorrow, and each one seems to have healed the sorrow's hurt with

the balm of pleasant philosophy. Her spinsters with lost loves have beautiful memories; "what might have been," but never has been, gives a tragedy invariably enveloped in a romantic, imaginative glamour. Mrs. McCullough apparently believes that contentment and peace and the cheerful outlook are from within—her world is what it wants to be; if Destiny blights, yet there are ever compensations. Listen to Aunt Peace. First she says, when asked why she never married:

"I may be wrong, but I have always felt that it was indelicate to allow oneself to care for a gentleman."

Later she explains her quiet contentment:

"I have deliberately forgotten all the unpleasant things and remembered the others. When a little pleasure has flashed for a moment against the dark, I have made that jewel mine. I have hundreds of them, from the time my baby fingers clasped my first rose to the night you and Lynn came to bring more sunshine into my old life. I call it my Necklace of Perfect Joy. When the world goes wrong, I have only to close my eyes, and remember all the links in the chain, set with gems, some large and some small, but all beautiful with the beauty that never fades. It is all I can take with me when I go. My material possessions must stay behind, but my Necklace of Perfect Joy will bring me happiness to the end, when I put it on to be nevermore unclasped."

Mrs. McCullough emphasizes the spiritual bond in love, carrying the idea through life, even into the life beyond. For example, "Life might take him from me; death never could," says one of her characters; and in *Flower of the Dusk* there is a wonderful study of the man who finds his best self through the death of a loved woman who could not be his in life because she was married to some one else. In much the same way the love of the man and woman in *Master of the Vineyard* cannot be realized, because of the woman's loveless marriage to another; and yet this love, which, in the hands of many a writer, would have given excuse for a study of sex questions, is turned to such good account that it becomes the instrument whereby both of those involved find happiness apart from each other—the woman with her husband, and the man with a girl whom he marries as an act of chivalry.

The one historical novel Mrs. McCullough has done, *The Shadow of Victory*, was less a success as a piece of fiction than most of her books. It is entertaining, but

not vital; and though it has sold well, it is not representative. On the other hand, her *Spinster Book*, a volume of bright, wise and mostly witty essays, is one of the cleverest things she has written, and establishes the many-sidedness of her humor beyond question.

In summing up a consideration of Myrtle Reed's books, one is tempted to epitomize her work in the one word—facility. Facility of thought, facility of imagination, facility of expression—these three constitute the main factors in her stories. And yet one must qualify such a summary by a recognition of the *heart* factor, which is, after all, the illuminator of the whole. Myrtle Reed lacks the epic quality—her talent is distinctly lyrical. She will never produce a mighty drama in fiction, nor will she find exercise for her powers in subtle psychological analysis; but whenever she writes, a host of friends will go with zest to the reading, and whatever she writes will have its influence in giving to its readers a memory sweet and haunting. The music of her words will always find response in the hearts of those who listen, and for all who would make of life a felicitous business, these books will prove an inspiration. No claim is made for them as literature, and yet literature they are, and literature they will remain so long as men and women love Love and continue to believe in the power of Love to uplift and glorify life, as well as in the power of Humor to mellow life and to enrich its sadness by that tender "sense of nonsense" which gives the laugh to tears and sees Heaven smiling even through the darkness.



Works by

Myrtle Reed

Old Rose and Silver

The Master's Violin

Love Letters of a Musician

Later Love Letters of a Musician

Love Affairs of Literary Men

The Shadow of Victory

At the Sign of the Jack-o'-Lantern

The Book of Clever Beasts

Lavender and Old Lace

A Weaver of Dreams

Master of the Vineyard

The Spinster Book

A Spinner in the Sun

Flower of the Dusk

Sonnets to a Lover

Pickaback Songs

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

These papers are reprinted with the permission of the Book News Monthly, in which they came into publication in January, 1911.

Since the monograph was put into type, the work and the life of Myrtle Reed have come to a close.

It has been thought best, however, to make no change in the text of the essays as originally printed.

The words of discriminating appreciation given at that time to the writings of Myrtle Reed and to the character of their author are as true and as pertinent as when first written.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS.

New York, August 25, 1911.

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